April 1996

Maximize Your Options at ASCC's Annual Conference

The Arkansas Spinal Cord Commission's seventh annual conference, "Living with Spinal Cord Injuries in the '90's: Maximizing Your Options," will be held Saturday, June 1st at the Arkansas 4-H Conference Center in West Little Rock.

Dave Cornelsen, DSW, will open the morning session with his keynote address entitled, "AXA World Ride '95: 'I Don't Believe in Can't'." If you have ever dreamed of traveling around the world to get away from it all, you will be interested in what Dr. Cornelsen has to say. In 1995, Dr. Cornelsen, a paraplegic, traveled by hand-pedaled

bike around the world through 23 countries and 18,000 miles with four companions. An excellent example of someone who has maximized his personal options - don't miss this opportunity to hear Dr. Cornelsen.

Concurrent sessions in the morning will feature topics on nutrition, wheelchair repair and personal options for adherence to ADA requirements. The afternoon sessions will concurrently present topics on managed care and Medicare, the Social Security PASS program, secondary disabilities, care givers, using humor, self advocacy, bowel and bladder management and sexuality.



Continued on Page 8 - See "Conference"

To Vote or Not to Vote

Join the members and guests of the Arkansas Spinal Cord Injury Association (ASCIA) at their quarterly meeting on May 7, 1996. The meeting will be held from 6:30 to 8:00 p.m. at the Second Presbyterian Church, Cantrell Avenue at Pleasant Valley Drive (east of the Cantrell/I-430 interchange).

Since 1996 is a big election year, ASCIA has invited Jackie Alexander, Director of Elections for the Secretary of State, to be the keynote speaker. Ms. Alexander will talk about the election process and provide information on polling place accessibility laws, use of absentee ballots and other issues of interest to voters with disabilities. If you have not registered to vote, you can register at the meeting.

Please join ASCIA for this enlightening discussion, followed by a brief social time with refreshments. For additional information, contact ASCIA President Bret Bridgers at 224-1798.

National Champion Times Two!!!

The Arkansas Rollin' Razorbacks and the Junior Rollin' Razorbacks really can say, "We're Number 1." Both teams captured 1996 National Championships.

The men's wheelchair basketball team went to their seventh consecutive Final Four in Portland, OR during the weekend of March 22-23. In the Semifinals, the number two ranked Razorbacks defeated number three ranked and eight-time National Champion Casa Colina Condors 59-51. This put Arkansas in the Championship game against the fourth ranked and defending National Champion Fresno Red Rollers, who upset the top ranked Dallas Mavericks by one point.

Fresno started out strong, leading the game by as many as 16 points before the Razorbacks turned up the defense and fought back to tie the score at 42 with 14 seconds left. Tim Kazee, who stole the inbound pass, was fouled with seven seconds to go in the game. He went to the freethrow line and made one of two to give Arkansas a 43-42 victory!

Continued on Page 6 - See "Champions"

SPINAL COURIER

Published quarterly by Arkansas Spinal Cord Commission

Cheryl L. Vines Executive Director

Thomas L. Farley
Dee Ledbetter
Co-Editors

The Arkansas Spinal Cord Commission does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, religion, age or disability in employment or the provision of services.

BUCKLE UP!

SPINAL COURIER Letters

Questions • Suggestions • Directions • Answers

True Grit

Dear Editor:

ASCC client Robert Morgan of Hot Springs, who has T-4 paraplegia, went hunting this past fall with Harold Stockman. Stockman writes the outdoors column of *The Community Press* of Millbrook, Alabama and was impressed with Robert's enthusiasm for the outdoors and his determination to continue hunting, fishing and gardening. As a result, he wrote a feature article about Robert which appeared in the December 7, 1995, edition of the *Press* on page 10.

I am happy to see one of my clients "in the news." If anyone would like a copy of the article, you should call *The Community Press* at 334-285-6000.

Bettie Tapp ASCC Case Manager Hot Springs, AR

Play Ball!



Dear Editor:

Delta Resource Center for Independent Living is forming a wheelchair softball team in the Pine Bluff area this spring. If any readers of *Spinal Courier* are interested in playing or participating, contact Jeff Hughes at 501-535-2222 or the ASCC Pine Bluff office at 501-534-2993.

Bobby Johnson ASCC Case Manager Pine Bluff, AR

New Items in the ASCC Education and Resource Center on Spinal Cord Injury

NEW FACT SHEETS #24 *Handicapped Parking and Placards* offers guidelines to getting a vehicle properly tagged to park in accessible spaces.

#25 Autonomic Dysreflexia explains the signs and symptoms of Autonomic Dysreflexia and suggests ways to prevent and treat it.

#26 Syringomyelia explains signs and symptoms of Syringomyelia and how to treat these tumors of the spine.

NEW BOOKS

Moving Violations: War Zones, Wheelchairs, and Declarations of Independence by John Hock-

enberry, two-time Peabody Award Winner and ABC news correspondent, is about his work experiences around the world (this very entertaining and provocative book has been very popular). **PAIN:** A Four-Letter Word You Can Live With by Sridhar V. Vasudevan, M.D. is a good resource for understanding and controlling pain.

Taking Charge by Kay H. Kriegsman, Ph.D., Elinor L. Zaslow, M.A. and Jennifer D'Zmura-Rechsteiner, M.A. is an excellent book for teenagers with disabilities which discusses communication, independence, dating, sexuality, etc.

NEW VIDEOS
20/20 with Barbara Walters
Interviewing Christopher Reeve
and Channel 7's Interview of
ASCC Client Elvin Whitehead
of Carlisle, AR - highly
recommended if you missed these

interviews on TV.

Please keep your requests coming in! If you need any information, please contact Karen Schmidt at 501-296-1792.

Spelling Bee Winner

Dear Editor:

Recently Kyle Hearnsberger, 5th grade student at Thornton Elementary (Calhoun Co.) participated in the District Spelling Bee at Bearden. Kyle placed first in the 5th grade division, then advanced to the overall competition where he competed against 4th-8th grade students. He placed second overall. His next stop was to countywide at SAU Tech in Camden, where he came in an impressive fourth, again competing against approximately 100 students in 4th-8th grades.

Kyle, who has Spina Bifida, is the son of Jim and Gwenda Hearnsberger of Thornton, AR.

Evelyn Wainwright ASCC Case Manager Magnolia, AR

HIGH PROFILE!

Bobby Johnson

This is the eleventh in a series of articles profiling the ASCC Case Managers.

Youth Counselor, Probation Officer, Law Enforcement Officer and Case Manager are all service oriented careers which have been pursued by Bobby Johnson. It is apparent from these job titles where this quiet, soft-spoken man's heart lies. It takes dedication and a very unique individual to fill these roles. Helping people comes natural to Bobby and was inspired at an early age. "My grandmother raised me and she instilled these qualities in me daily. It's because of her I chose the profession I did."

Bobby obtained his degree at the University of Arkansas in Pine Bluff in 1985 with a major in Gerontology and a minor in Criminal Justice. After four years experience in corrections and law enforcement, he joined "forces" with the Arkansas Spinal Cord Commission in 1989.

His capabilities were quickly recognized by other state employees, as he received two awards from the Department of Human Services for "Outstanding Employee of 1990" and "Most Positive Employee." In 1992, "Most Productive Employee" was added to his credentials.

Bobby has also earned national recognition and a trip to Washington, D.C. In 1995, he was chosen by the National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research (NIDRR) to serve on a grant screening committee.

As ASCC Case Manager for eight southeast Arkansas counties, Bobby spends many hours providing services to 173 clients anywhere from Grant County to Chicot County. His good-hearted nature is welcomed by those individuals in his area, and it is



very likely they would all tell his grandmother she has many reasons to be proud.

FAMILY MEMBERS: Fourteen year old daughter, Andrea.

PHRASE THAT BEST DESCRIBES ME: Treat others the way you would like them to treat you.

FAVORITE WAY TO UNWIND: Spending a day at home with family and friends.

HIDDEN TALENTS/HOBBIES: My hobbies are reading, traveling and watching television. A hidden talent of mine would be that I love to draw and paint. I'm pretty good, I might add.

ACCOMPLISHMENT I'M MOST PROUD OF: Being able to give something back to those who have given so much to me.

SOMETHING I'D CHANGE ABOUT MYSELF IF I COULD: I would change my height. I used to always dream of being seven feet tall.

LAST GOOD BOOK I READ: A Man's Search for Meaning by Dr. Viktor Frankle.

MY DREAM VACATION WOULD BE: I would like to visit France and Italy, all in the same week.

MOST IMPORTANT THING I'VE LEARNED AS A CASE MANAGER: One should seek to do this life's work as if God Almighty called him at this particular moment in history to do it. And he must do it with a sense of cosmic responsibility.

BEST ADVICE TO SOMEONE WITH A DISABILITY: We must discover our potentialities as well as our limitations. Accept yourself. Never try to be anybody else.

The Stretch Reflex

by Grover Evans, Ph.D. Chairman, ASCC

This is the third and final article of a series.

Everyone's muscles are protected by a mechanism called the stretch reflex. Anytime you stretch the muscle fibers too far (by either bouncing or overstretching), a nerve reflex responds by sending a signal to the muscles to contract; this will keep the muscle from being injured. Simply put, when you stretch too far you tighten the very muscles you are trying to stretch. **Never over stretch.**

Holding a stretch as far as you can or bouncing up and down strains the muscles and activates the stretch reflex. Will this cause pain? You'd better believe it, as well as physical damage to the muscle fibers. Tearing muscle fibers leads to scar tissue and a loss of elasticity. The muscle will become tight and sore.

Most of us remember the old saying, "No pain, no gain." We were taught to associate pain with physical improvement - the more it hurt, the more we would get out of it. Wrong! we were being fooled. Stretching, when done as discussed in part two of this series, is not painful. Always listen to your body because it knows what it can take, and pain is an indication that something is very wrong.

It is best to always have someone assist you. You will find that your flexibility will naturally increase from the easy phase to the developmental phase. By stretching regularly with comfortable and painless feelings, you will be able to go beyond your present limits and come closer to your personal potential.

I do hope you have enjoyed this series on stretching. If you would like more information, please let me know.

Have a great stretched day!

From the Director

The calendar says it's Spring, but as I write today with snow flurries predicted, it sure doesn't seem like it! But my other sure sign of Spring is evident: basketball season is winding down - for those of you who don't live for sports, we call it "March Madness." I wish every one of our Courier readers could have squeezed into the Ken Trickey Center in Tulsa with me March 15-16 to watch our Junior Rollin' Razorbacks win their first national championship! The "big" Razorbacks have nothing on these guys!

These Junior Hogs really know what teamwork means - everyone has a role. With ages ranging from 10 to 17 and abilities just as varied, these guys worked together to make it happen for their team. The big scorers got all the glory (just like life, huh?), but it took everyone to win: the guys who "set the picks" and played defense,

those who cheered from the sideline, the volunteer coach and parents who got everyone there - a true team effort.

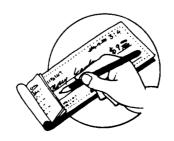
It occurred to me as I watched, just how important teamwork is, not just in sports, but in life. We all work with teams - our families, our churches, at work, in our communities, with organizations like the Spina Bifida Association, Family Voices or ASCIA - to make things happen. On a team, everyone, no matter what his or her ability or disability, has a role and a responsibility. Are you doing your part on your teams? We won't all be national champions, but we can all succeed! GO TEAM!!!

By the way, I'll look for you at our annual conference on June 1st. Come be part of our ASCC team!

Cheryl L. Vines

With Thanks

The Arkansas Spinal Cord Commission accepts tax deductible dontions. The generosity of the many individuals and families who have made memorial donations over the years is greatly appreciated. Contributions are used to assist our clients through purchases of equipment and educational resources. If you would like to make a contribution, please contact the Commission or send your donation to:



AR Spinal Cord Commission 1501 North University, Suite 470 Little Rock, AR 72207.

Donations this Quarter:

Clifton Coates Quickie Designs/Sunrise Medical

Keys to Healthy Eating

by Grover Evans, Ph.D.
Guest Writer for ASCC Medical Director Column

We are familiar with the old saying, "You are what you eat." The real problem is too many of us are not doing what's best for our bodies. We eat entirely too much high fat food and tend to be "couch potatoes." A new multimillion dollar weight loss industry has emerged as a result. Supermarkets and health food stores are full of products to help control weight gain. Let's look at ways your body can grow to its full potential with less risk of disease.

First, did you have break-fast this morning? Breakfast is considered the most important meal of the day. What you eat now will affect your health, not only today,



but for years to come. People with spinal cord injuries are a high risk group for heart disease, high blood pressure, stroke, diabetes, obesity and colon cancer. It is up to us, as individuals, to

make the changes necessary to stay healthy.

The nutrients your body needs daily are carbohydrates, protein, fat, vitamins, minerals, fiber and water (I know, water you must drink 6 to 8 glasses daily, the more the better). The keys to healthy eating can be summed up in three words:

Variety

Try to eat different foods each day, since each food offers you different amounts of nutrients.

Moderation

There are no "bad" foods, so you should not feel you have to eliminate foods from your diet. However, try to cut down or limit your intake of those foods that are high in fat, saturated fat, cholesterol and sugar.

• Balance

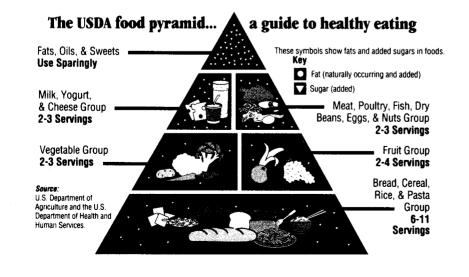
Try to put together a nutritious diet over a period of time. Some meals will not be as good for you as others. However, by the end of the

day or by the end of several days, you should have balanced those "eat occasionally" foods with "eat anytime" foods for a healthy diet.

The USDA Food Guide Pyramid illustrates your daily needs from each food group. The bottom of the pyramid is your foundation, building up layer by layer with other necessary foods. For good health, eat a variety of foods from the bottom three layers of the pyramid, and finish sparingly with foods from the top of the pyramid.

The Food Guide Pyramid is an outline of what to eat each day. It is not a rigid prescription, but a general guide that lets us you choose a healthful diet that is **right for you**. The pyramid calls for eating a variety of foods to get the nutrients you need and, at the same time, the right amount of calories to maintain a healthy weight.

If you need assistance with food choices and nutrition, please consult your health care professional. I hope to see you at the ASCC Conference on Saturday, June 1st where I can give you more information on healthy eating. Please send any questions on nutrition you would like answered at the conference to my attention at: Arkansas Spinal Cord Commission, 1501 N. University, Suite 470, Little Rock, AR 72207.



5

SCI Pain: What Makes It Worse, What Helps?

by Barry Corbet, Editor of New Mobility.

A study of pain in 92 people with spinal cord injury (SCI) recently was completed by Carol Anson and her colleagues at the Clinical Research Department of Shepherd Center in Atlanta. "The problem is pretty severe for many people with SCI," Anson says. "In fact, our patients frequently say that it is more disabling than the original injury."

Participants were asked what circumstances made their pain worse and what seemed to help. Their answers are of interest to anyone with dysesthetic pain (a.k.a. central deafferentation pain) secondary to SCI.

The clear winner (read: bummer) in aggravating circumstances is

fatigue, suggesting that by monitoring and accommodating your own energy levels, you might avoid both fatigue and pain. Running second and third, respectively, are bad weather and spasticity, offering no simple behavioral solutions. Urinary tract infections and menstruation are the next most common aggravating factors, followed by bad moods and bowel movements.

So there you have it - don't get tired, live in a sunny place, avoid spasticity and infections, be male, be happy and forget about bowel movements. No, no - you didn't read it here: *New Mobility* does not recommend eliminating your bowel program. Nor sex change surgery.

The results: By a large margin, prescription drugs helped the most people. Second most effective was distraction of any kind, closely followed by massage, a warm bath, alcohol and exercise. Interestingly, of the factors quantified, over-the-counter drugs came in last.

Pain was not related to neurological level or completeness of injury, race, gender or cause of accident. Prevailing wisdom has held otherwise - suggesting that cauda equinal lesions (L1 and below) and gunshot injuries are more likely to produce chronic pain. It will take larger studies to put this point to rest.

Champions - Continued from Page 1

The Razorbacks, who earned their fouth National Championship, were led by Tim Kazee, who was named to

the Second All Tournament Team, and by Darren Schenebeck, who was named to the First All Tournament Team. Other members of the Rollin' Razorbacks include: James Coughlin, John Gould, Jared Johnson, Charles Sample, Grant Strohback, Steven Tew, Dennis Williams and Gary Woodring.



In only their second attempt, the Junior Rollin' Razorbacks captured their first national title. The tournament, held in Tulsa, OK, hosted 16 teams from all over the country. The Junior Rollin' Razorbacks opened the tournament with wins over the Mad City (Wisconsin) Bombers 50-37 and Team Nebraska 54-39. In the Semifinal game, Arkansas took care of the number three ranked Chicago Rollin' Rebels 67-54. In the Championship game the Razorbacks had an easy time defeating the number one ranked and defending National Champion Kentwood (Michigan) Pacers 60-42.

The Junior Rollin' Razorbacks were led by Steven Tew, who was selected to the All Tournament Team, and by Eddie McGee, who was named Tournament MVP. Other members on the team are Jason Allen, Ashish Bhakta, Ryan Buchman, Jeremy Farley, Tyler Garner, James Rucker, Nathan Scudder, Wes Thweatt, Ben Vaughn and Joe Wells.

Pain Resources

- John D. Loeser, MD, Univ. of Washington Multidisciplinary Pain Center, Seattle, WA, 800-326-5300.
- Policy and Research (for acute pain), 800-358-9295.
- The American Chronic Pain Assn. (national self-help organization focusing on peer support, with referral to more than 800 support groups, and coping skills), P.O. Box 850, Rocklin, CA 95677, 916-632-0922.
- The National Chronic Pain Outreach Assn. (newsletter, referrals, database of publications, physicians, pain centers and support groups; national political advocacy), 7979 Old Georgetown Rd., Ste. 100, Bethesda, MD 10814-2429, 301-652-4948.

Continued on Page 7 - See "Pain Resources"

Getting The Most From Your Battery

If you are a person who uses powered mobility, you depend on batteries to give you freedom and independence. In theory, batteries are one of life's simple necessities. You pop them in and off you go. However, to ensure your battery's safest use, best performance and the longest wear, consider the following tips:

- Never forget that batteries are dangerous. The materials inside them are highly corrosive and toxic. When batteries charge, they produce hydrogen gas which is very flammable. Do not smoke around charging batteries and be careful when working with them.
- It is a good idea to wear safety glasses and heavy rubber gloves when working with batteries. They protect your eyes and hands from dangerous acid spills.

Pain Resources

Continued from Page 6

- The National Spinal Cord Injury Assn. (referrals to physicians, treatment options, support groups - SCI only), 545 Concord Ave., Cambridge, MA 02138, 800-962-9629.
- Paralyzed Veterans of America (literature, referrals to chapters), Dept. of Research and Education, 801 18th St., NW, Washington, DC 10006, 800-424-8200.

Reprinted with permission from New Mobility, September 1995. Copies detailing the subject of SCI pain are available from New Mobility. For subscriptions or information call 800-543-4116.

- Incorrectly connected batteries can damage your chair's electronics. Always double check the battery connection.
- Use only distilled water for wet cell batteries. Tap water or even bottled drinking water has other particles in them

which dilute the concentration of acid within a battery. Drinking water or tap water reduces the effectiveness and life of your battery.

• Do not overfill batteries. Overfilling spills

and dilutes the acid in the battery. Fill wet cells so the plates are covered with about an inch or so of distilled water. It is hard to judge, but a good estimate is around an inch and a half from the top of the vent hole. For safety's sake just estimate, don't measure the distance.

- Gel batteries are not necessarily sealed. A sealed battery should be labeled "sealed." An unsealed gel battery could still leak if tipped over.
- If you have a chair or scooter that you take apart to transport, pay the extra money for sealed gel cell batteries. Spilled acid from a wet cell battery will eat a hole in your car's trunk in no time.
- Before using newly installed batteries, charge your chair or scooter. Remember, before you bought them, they sat on a shelf somewhere for a little while.

- Corroded battery terminals may be cleaned with baking soda and water paste. Disconnect batteries from your chair or scooter first. Apply baking soda paste with a steel bristle brush (or an old toothbrush works also but takes longer). After a little scrubbing, wipe clean with a wet rag. To keep terminals free of corrosion, apply some petroleum jelly to clean terminals once batteries are reconnected.
- Batteries for cellular phones have a memory but wheelchair batteries do not. Do not run wheelchair batteries all the way down for memory purposes.
- Leaving batteries on concrete will not discharge them. Fully charged wet cell batteries hold a charge for approximately 3 months, gel cells 6 to 12 months, even on concrete. Temperature conditions can affect a battery. A cold basement floor in the dead of winter will shorten your battery's life.
- Dispose of old batteries properly. They are environmentally hazardous. Check

with your wheelchair vendor to see if they recycle batteries. Some gas stations accept batteries for recycling and certain places even pay for them.

Reprinted from TIRR Connection, Fall 1994, page 5. Written by Kim Wright.

Conference - Continued from Page 1

Ten exhibitors will be on hand to demonstrate new equipment and to answer your questions about their products and services. In addition, a resource table for information exchange will be available. This year will also feature a craft/hobby exhibit put on by five Arkansans with disabilities. Come see and hear directly from those who are doin'!

Even with all these things to do and see, there will still be time to renew old friendships and to make new ones. So plan to come early and stay late - it will be a day of fun and learning.

Registration brochures will soon be mailed, so return your registration early (scholarships are available to ASCC clients and their family/ providers). If you have questions about the conference or registration, please contact Dee Ledbetter at 296-1784.

ASCC thanks our co-sponsors of this year's conference:

- Baptist Rehabilitation Institute
- Continental Medical Systems
- HealthSouth Rehabilitation Hospital of Fort Smith
- St. Michael Rehabilitation Hospital
- Hot Springs Rehabilitation Center
- Snell Prosthetic & Orthotic Lab.

SPINAL COURIER

Arkansas Spinal Cord Commission 1501 North University, Suite 470 Little Rock, AR 72207

Commission Members:

Grover Evans - Jonesboro (Chair) Sloan Lessley - Calico Rock Russell Patton - Jonesboro Sheila Galbraith Bronfman - Little Rock Sandra Turner - Little Rock

FORWARDING AND RETURN POSTAGE GUARANTEED, ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

Calendar of Upcoming Events

SPRING FISHING DERBIES --

Little Rock Area:

Fishing Derby, Cookout, Prizes, Lots of Fun!!! Saturday, April 27, 1996,

9:00 am to 3:00 pm, at the Oasis

Renewal Center Pond, Little Rock,

AR. Rain date: Saturday, May 11, 1996. Call the Little Rock ASCC Office at 296-1792 for more information.

Russellville Area:

Saturday, May 11, 1996, 10:00 am to 12:00 noon, at Rest Haven Memorial Park Pond, Russellville. Rain date: Sunday, May 12, 3:00 pm to 5:00 pm. Call the Russellville ASCC office at 890-5751 for more information.

Batesville/.Jonesboro Area:

Saturday, May 18, 1996, 10:00 am to 4:00 pm, at Lyon College Bryan Lake, Batesville. Rain date: Sunday, May 19, 1996. Call the Batesville ASCC office at 793-4153 or the Jonesboro ASCC office at 972-4923 for more information.

ABC News Correspondent John Hockenberry will kick off the 1996 NISH Training Conference April 28 - May 1, 1996, at the Doral Resort in Miami, FL. The four-day conference offers participants technical training in identifying and managing federal government contracts under the Javits-Wagner-O'Day (JWOD) Program and information needed to implement those contracts. For additional information, please contact: CC Team, NISH; 2235 Cedar Lane, Vienna, VA 22182-5200; (703) 641-2757, Fax: (703) 560-8473.

To have activities announced in the July '96 issue of Spinal Courier, call the co-editors at 296-1784 by 6/20/96.

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